

TAMPA MORNING TRIBUNE

TAMPA, FLORIDA, FRIDAY, APRIL 16, 1909

TO EXHUME BODY OF FICARROTTA; FIND NEW CLUES

*IF THEORY OF OFFICERS PROVES CORRECT IT IS EXPECTED
THAT MORE ARRESTS WILL BE MADE*

JURY STILL IN SESSION

CHIRAMANTE'S MOTHER AND BROTHER AMONG ARRESTS

One Theory Is That Apprehension of Chiramante Had Something to Do With Malice Against Victim

A sensation was sprung in the Ficarrotta* assassination case yesterday morning when the coroner's jury, in an adjourned secret session, decided to have the body exhumed in Oaklawn cemetery at 10 o'clock this morning for purpose of making a closer examination of the wounds which caused the death of the wealthy wholesaler than they were able to conduct on the night of the murder. This decision was arrived at after much discussion and is understood to be the result of new developments in the case which have been kept from the public and regarding which every effort is being made to maintain absolute secrecy.

In spite of the absolute secrecy maintained in both the session of the inquest jury yesterday morning and Monday morning from which both public and newspaper men were barred, the fact that the body would be exhumed this morning gained circulation and caused a great deal of comment, especially after the rumor was found to be correct. According to the arrangements made yesterday, the exhumation will be conducted by Undertaker J.L. Reed and Dr. Fitta and the jury will be on the ground to make a close and careful examination regarding the points which they wish to settle. Then the body will be interred once more.

Much Interest Manifested

A great deal of curiosity is expected to be manifested, as is usually the case in an exhumation, and it is possible that a cordon of officers will be posted to prevent the overcurious ones from pressing too close to the grave and interfering with the secrecy of the proceedings. The exhumation of the body of Ficarrotta recalls the exhumation of the body of Ed Wallace, who was killed in Ellinger City two years ago, and for which Francisco Alfano was placed on trial. The purpose of the exhumation was to determine whether Alfano had killed Wallace by shooting him in self defense, or whether Alfano had first killed Wallace with a blunt instrument and afterwards shot him for the purpose of throwing officers off the scent.

Another Sensation

Another result of the secret session held yesterday morning was the making of four additional arrests. The news of the additional arrests being made caused considerable excitement among West Tampan and a great deal of speculation was indulged in regarding how much evidence the jury had against them. Those arrested were taken before the jury and Justice Boyett and closely questioned regarding their possible connection with the case, but beyond the fact that they denied having had anything to do with the assassination it could not be learned what the questioning revealed, if anything.

Whether these arrests were made on account of a new theory advanced by the state regarding the murder or is the result of circumstantial evidence against the parties is not known. As nearly as could be learned regarding the inquest proceedings the parties are held because of circumstantial evidence pointing to them

either as being principals or accomplices to the murder. But the idea that the arrests were made on account of new theory by the state is strengthened by that two of the parties arrested are the mother and brother of Orniferio Chirmante, the man now in jail pending trial for the murder of B. LaBella, the wealthy New York broker. The others arrested besides Chirmante's mother and his brother, Paolo Chirmante, were Castenzo Vallone, Vicente Greco and Castenge Ficarrotta, the latter being a cousin of the murdered man. The Vincente Greco arrested is not the V. Greco who is a wealthy property owner in Ybor City, and so far as known, is not related to him, the latter Mr. Greco being in Ybor City at the time of the assassination of Ficarrotta.

Cases are Connected

Thus it seems that the murder of B. LaBella for his money and the assassination of G. Ficarrotta for causes at present unknown, are intimately connected, and this theory has been gaining ground among officers for some time. In what way the two are connected is not known, but it is believed possible that Ficarrotta was killed on account of possible assistance which he may have rendered officers in the arrest of Chiramonte and it is also rumored that some of Chiramonte's friends or relatives or some society Chiramonte may have gone to Ficarrotta for money toward raising a sum with which to defend Chiramonte and that, when Ficarrotta refused to contribute, his assassination was arranged.

Just what is known by the officers which may connect the two cases, they will not give out, but it is declared that the officers and coroner's jury are in possession of a great deal of information which they are keeping strictly secret and which would cause a profound sensation throughout the city. Why the cousin of Ficarrotta should be mixed up in the murder is a matter of conjecture among outsiders, but it is believed that the coroner's jury is in possession of this information. Two new witnesses were examined yesterday besides those who were heard Monday. It is stated that Vellone is held in jail principally as a witness, and Sheriff Jackson stated Wednesday that Senlito Renezro, the man held by the jury of inquest on Monday, is in jail for the same cause. This makes nine arrests in the Ficarrotta case, five being held in jail and four being turned loose.

League of Citizens

There has been a persistent rumor on the streets for several days that a league of citizens for the purpose of assisting the officers in maintaining law and order in this city and for the purpose of assisting in hunting down the murderers of Ficarrotta has been formed or is about to be formed. Every effort has been made to verify the report, but those who have been heard to speak of the matter when gone to by newspaper men have either denied any knowledge of same or have declared that they were not at liberty to state what they knew or who is behind the movement. If there is such a movement on foot, it is being kept very quiet. Sheriff Jackson, Solicitor Raney and other officials declare that they have heard nothing of the matter, but Sheriff Jackson admits that this is a case where he is compelled in a large measure to rely on aid furnished by outsiders.

Every effort is being made by Sheriff Jackson, the coroner's jury and the officers on the job to catch the right men as soon as possible, the officers on the case being required to report to Sheriff Jackson at frequent intervals for suggestions and advice. Frequent conferences are held with Justice Boyett, Deputy Sheriff George Bell, who has been working on the case ever since Saturday night, declares that he has been able to eat only one meal home a day since Monday and has lost a great deal of sleep. Mr. Bell is being assisted by Deputy James Keggin, formerly a member of the police force, while Marshall Logan of the West Tampa department, and F. Gonzalez, Judge Boyett's constable are working night and day on the case. Gonzalez made all the arrests yesterday morning with the exception of one.

Ruin's City's Reputation

Every citizen of West Tampa is aroused over the murder of Ficarrotta, coming so soon after the murder of Antonio Urso by Antonio Dechedue (*) and murder of B. LaBella, of which Orniferio Chiramonte is accused. They realize that such a series of murders, if kept up for long, will ruin the reputation of the city and decrease property values. Every effort is being made among Americans to bring the murders to justice, and Ficarrotta has scores of friends among his own countrymen who are enthusiastically co-operating.

West Tampa authorities declare that the assassination of Ficarrotta is the worst crime ever committed in that city. The murdered man was not given a show for his life, but was leaped upon by three men and shot from behind before he had opportunity to lift one finger in his own defense, and he was killed in front of his own doorstep and in the presence of his own children. The realization that the men who did the act are among the worst villains who ever drew breath is what is spurring everyone on to bring them to justice and is largely responsible for talk now going on about organizing a committee of citizens. The law and order league which was organized early last year after Grana affair seems to have had a healthy effect as no more murders and attempted assassinations took place until December.

Other Affairs

The assassination of Ficarrotta recalls the case of two Italians who were ambushed and shot to death on Seventeenth street, Ybor City, within half a block of the principal business thoroughfare, on the night of September 4, 1906, and for which no one was ever brought to justice, the relatives of the men assassinated being afraid to tell what they knew. These numerous affairs, which have been tracing a bloody course from month to month for several years, brings to the realization of Tampans the possibility of an organization existing in this city which is protected in a measure by fear that it inspires and the fact that its agents, who always strike in the dark, have never paid the penalty of any of these crimes.

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(*) The correct spelling of the Diecidue.